

July 22, 1959

MEMORANDUM OF CONFERENCE WITH THE PRESIDENT

Others present: **Secretaries Dillon and Murphy**
General Goodpaster

Mr. Dillon and Mr. Murphy came in to discuss with the President the latter's draft of a reply to Khrushchev concerning the possibility of an exchange of visits by him and the President. Mr. Dillon commented that the draft implied that the same preconditions existed for a meeting of Khrushchev with the President as for a summit meeting. The President said this was automatic since his invitation had made such a visit incident to a summit meeting in Quebec.

Mr. Murphy said he had not understood that the two questions were tied together in this way and that in fact what had been conveyed to Khrushchev was an unqualified invitation. The President was extremely disturbed about this. He recalled that he had wanted to have Khrushchev make a quick visit right away, using as the basis a visit to his exhibition in New York, with a day or two of informal discussions thereafter; this would have occurred at a time prior to knowing the outcome of the Geneva discussions, and would have been independent of their success or failure. Mr. Herter and the State Department people had, however, said that it would help to obtain results at Geneva if the invitation were now issued, and he recalled clearly that it was tied to a Quebec meeting. He said that someone had failed to bring clearly to his attention that the invitation was being extended on some other basis.

Mr. Murphy said he by no means believed that failure at the Geneva conference is certain. Mr. Dillon said there has not been enough time for a decision by Khrushchev in light of the President's invitation to get to Gromyko in Geneva and reorient his stand.

PORTIONS EXEMPTED

SEARCHED SERIALIZED INDEXED

Alchetron

NLE Date 8/31/21

• NLE Date 2/23/23

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12858. See 3.204

MR. 80-197 #6
Date 9/2/51

The President said very strongly that we have insisted throughout that we would not have a summit meeting without progress at the Foreign Ministers meeting. Mr. Murphy said the holding of a summit meeting is still conditioned on such progress. However, he felt that the United States would get a lot of credit if the President were to see Khrushchev even without progress at Geneva. In fact, he felt that such a meeting would "bring along" summit prospects.

The President said he just did not see how he could have Khrushchev in the United States for ten days if there has been a break-down at Geneva. The President said that a two-day session at Camp David before the final outcome of the Geneva conference was known is one thing, and a ten-day visit under such circumstances is quite another. Mr. Murphy repeated that he thought there was a good chance that we would accomplish something at Geneva.

The President said, in response to a comment by Mr. Murphy that the Soviets may permit the factual situation in Berlin to remain "unchanged," that it will take more than that to warrant a summit meeting. We must have some kind of four-power arrangement relating to German reunification. He said he is staggered by the situation now presented to him, since he had had no thought of having an unqualified invitation extended to Khrushchev. He reverted to the point that he had thought of a different sequence of events, and in fact had asked the State people to study most carefully the factor of timing. It was a surprise to him that his concept on safeguarding the invitation had not been observed.

Mr. Dillon suggested it is too soon to know just where we stand as regards an answer to Khrushchev. We need at least a few more days to let the matter "play out." The President showed to Mr. Dillon and Mr. Murphy a draft he proposed to send to Macmillan; he felt some response was necessary because of the overly optimistic tone of Macmillan's message of suggestions for the Vice President. There was agreement that the rather somber tone of the President's note to Macmillan was appropriate.

Mr. Dillon showed the President an alternative draft of a response to Khrushchev on which some preliminary work had been done in the State Department. The President said it all boiled down to the fact that in light of the unqualified invitation that had been given, he would have to pay the penalty. In considering the matter further, he noted that Khrushchev had stressed that a great reception would be prepared for President Eisenhower in Russia. He thought he could make the point that he cannot order such a reception on the part of our people as can Khrushchev on the part of his. However, if the Geneva negotiations show some progress he would be able to evoke a fine reception for Mr. Khrushchev. He was thinking of a passage to the effect that if he and Khrushchev could meet in an atmosphere improved by clear evidence of some progress in easing world tensions, that would be far more fruitful in promoting the mutual understanding we seek than in the absence of such demonstrated improvement; and that so far as our own people are concerned, the President could not emphasize too strongly how hopefully they would look at a meeting between himself and Khrushchev if some such prior improvement had been clearly accomplished. The President said, however, that these developments leave him with a question in his mind as to just what purpose it is now felt that a meeting with Khrushchev would serve. He recalled that he had been trying to use such a meeting to get something accomplished at Geneva.

Mr. Murphy said he would try to drive home with Menshikov, when the two of them meet, the need for some progress at Geneva.

The President said he also had on his mind the question as to what we would tell our allies in justification of such a meeting. Mr. Dillon commented that it would not be a negotiating meeting like a four-power session, but would be to clarify our respective positions.

The President commented that he was troubled by the handling of this matter. He recalled that he and Mr. Dulles had always talked from ideas or topics and not from papers. Mr. Dulles would then put on paper the idea upon which they had agreed and send it to the President to correct and confirm.

PORCTIONS EXEMPTED

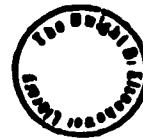
E.O. 14176, Sec. 1.301 (d)

NSC Letter 10/10/61
NLE Date: 8/31/71

The President asked for a draft that would bring out clearly the position of the State Department that progress at Geneva is not essential to a meeting of himself with Khrushchev, but that such progress would bring about a much more effective visit. This draft should make clear that he has asked Khrushchev to come and talk and see our country, and that he would be asking for the courtesy of our people. It must be clear that he is not revoking his invitation. We will continue to stand completely firm regarding a summit meeting; this will be a question of the two getting together for exploratory talks.

The President then turned to another subject, arising from a letter he had received from C. D. Jackson. C. D. had suggested that the President should go to Paris to see de Gaulle, because there is a rising question of differences over prestige as during the war when the President was the only man who could work effectively with de Gaulle. C. D. suggests that the visit might occur on the fifteenth anniversary of the liberation of Paris, on August 25th. He said he was somewhat drawn to the suggestion.

The initial reaction of Mr. Murphy and Mr. Dillon was favorable. They thought such a visit would strike a good sentimental note. The President said that if he were to go he would plan to arrive early on the 25th and stay through that day. He would hope to see Prime Minister Macmillan in Paris on the following day before leaving and then come straight on home.



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